



Official Publication of The Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc.



MINNEGAZETTE

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ABOUT THE COVER: Following years of research, hard, back-breaking work and skillful restoration, "Dan Patch #100" - the world's first internal combustion railway locomotive - forerunner of every diesel in America today - is nearing rebirth at the MTM's Como Shops in St. Paul. An almost single-handed effort (and crusade) of MTM master mechanic Bob Renz and crew, the restoration work on #100 has brought this valuable museum property to near Class 1 Ry. standards over the last three years. Here they are shown applying TLC to the engine's exterior surfaces preparatory to repainting. Our congratulations to Renz and crew - they were recently featured by the Oliver Towne Columnist in the St. Paul Pioneer Press Sunday edition. Courtesy to the St. Paul paper press photographer Bob Walsh and celebrated columnist Gareth Hiebert for the fine pix.

THE PRESIDENT'S SPRING MESSAGE -by Frank Sandberg

Yes, summer is finally here, or nearly so; the work is progressing in all areas of our museum. The long promised northern extension is under way, restoration activities at Como Shops are in full swing, and #1300 is undergoing her final "sprucing up" in preparation for the May 22nd opening of the C-H line.

1976 promises to be a very good year for MTM with renewed public interest being generated by our extension and the upgrading of our station area and site. Our success this season, as in the past, will be measured by how much we, as a group, can put into our various museum activities. Much has been accomplished in the past, but much more lies ahead; and if everyone concerned pitches in and does his or her part, no matter how big or small it may be, we will continue to build our reputation as the group that can get things done.

Remember, that the next general membership meeting will be on Tuesday, May 25th aboard #1300 at Lake Harriet. The post meeting program will include an auction of valuable items donated to MTM specifically to raise money for our many museum projects. Some out of print C.E.R.A. bulletins will be auctioned off among other things. If you have any trolley or electric railway items that you would like to donate to the cause, please contact Ken Holley at 888-8394. And, please note--no railroad items please--save those for the next Northstar Chapter N.R.H.S. auction. I look forward to personally seeing you all at the next meeting, which I trust will be S.R.O.; so come early to assure yourself a seat.

Sincerely----Frank Sandberg.

MTM GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The next regularly scheduled MTM General Membership meeting is slated for

Date: Tuesday, May 25th, 1976

Time: 8 o'clock p.m.

Place: 42nd. St. Station on the Como-Harriet Carline.

Membership Meeting cont.

The session will be held aboard car #1300 at the Linden Hills Carhouse and members are urged to arrive at the 42nd St. Station platform between 7:45 p.m. and 7:55 p.m. for the ride up the Hill! Parking is available in the Lake Harriet Pavilion/Bandstand area.

ERM PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER EXTENDED!

In the last issue of the "Minnegazette", we announced the impending publication of our long-awaited work - "The Electric Railways of Minnesota" by Russell L. Olson. And, we offered members a special pre-publication purchase price of \$25.00 - limit one per member - over the regular price of \$29.95 - through April 30, 1976. OOPS! Did we receive the flak! Many members had planned to purchase more than one copy and were quite upset that the "one to a customer" limit had been imposed.

Therefore, by popular (and insistent) request, we are extending the pre-publication offer to May 30, 1976 for any reasonable number of copies at \$25.00 each. (Minnesota residents add 4% sales tax)

Only current MTM members are eligible for this offer. Again, we've included a handy order blank at the back of this issue. The book is now in final proofing and should be on the press very soon. So, order today!

SPRING (AND THE COMO-HARRIET) IS BUSTIN' OUT ALL OVER

With the melting snows and the first gentle warm zephyrs of spring -- (and some not so warm) the long-winter sleep of the Como Harriet Streetcar line and venerable car #1300 end; the bustle of activities is reborn, anew. On Wednesday, April 14th, the grading work for the initial portion of the northern extension from Wm. Berry Bridge was completed. This was accomplished following considerable survey work by Vice-President, Construction & Maintenance, Ken Snyder and crew. A particular vote of thanks for this activity goes to Gary Neunsinger, who took time off from his work and expended many, many long hours to perform the critical northern extension survey project.

The principal obstacle to be overcome in pushing the rails northward, is the bottomless swamp parallel to the original right-of-way (now occupied by cemetery lots) and east of the archery range. The gradework will permit a gradual grade between the original right-of-way north of Berry bridge and the new parallel R-O-W. A problem with #1300's air compressor was also rectified this spring; the troublesome device was dismounted, overhauled and reinstalled in time for the Saturday, May 29th (Memorial Day weekend) public opening. Unofficially, however, we will be open for 'biz' on Saturday and Sunday, May 22nd & 23rd as sort of a 'shake-down' run. Also, in the works; the Minnesota State Federation of Garden Clubs will be laying sod at the 42nd St. Station to give our platform area a beautifying green appearance. The work has already begun. To maintain this new greenery, MTM will be running a water line to the station to permit regular watering. The work schedules for the '76 building & maintenance have already been sent out to you, the membership.

Ken Snyder asks that each member keep his appointed individual work schedule--or at least arrange with another member to take his place, on his own initiative if a conflict arises. Only through commitment of the individual member, can the broad goals of '76 be realized.

MTM POTPOURRI

Enclosed with this issue are the latest promotional flyers/bulletins published by the Museum.

Ride the Trolley for '76 -Two 8x10" flyers prepared as part of the Como-Harriet advertising program. Over the next few weeks, these leaflets will be distributed throughout the metro area to interested groups and prospective riders. Help us get the word out--pass one of these on to a friend--post it at work.

The Official Announcement of "The Electric Railways of Minnesota"

Hard to believe, but it's true. The book is almost off the press! The Museum has waited many years to publish this - our most important and significant historical work. This is one of the official, public announcements of E.R.M. You, as a member, can help publicize this remarkable new work. Give a copy of this flyer to a fellow railfan somewhere. It's a must for any complete railway and/or traction library.

North by Northeast

This unusual flyer is a public appeal for funds for our long-sought and long awaited move toward Lake Calhoun, --the northern extension. We're on the move and we need funds to carry forward the tracklaying effort! Pass'em around!

QUESTIONNAIRE REMINDER!

MTM'rs are reminded by V.P. Scott Heiderich to please return the museum questionnaire sent out earlier this spring. This inquiry is vital to the performance and operation of the organization and to pinpoint the interests and skills and assets of the membership. Please get them in the mail today! We need your help!

THE NIGHT #1241 DIDN'T MAKE IT --by MTM'r Ken Johnson

First, let me introduce myself -- I'm Ken Johnson and I live in Stillwater. I began my TCRT streetcar career in 1946 shortly after getting out of the Navy.

The night was in January 1949 - I was working a regular run on the Maria-Ft. Snelling line. As I was cashing in for the day the clerk asked me if I would work a "store extra" as the man marked up for it was ill. Always eager for extra pay, I agreed. The "store extra", I was told, was to double head the 9:15 Mahtomedi. I was to be in front of the Mahtomedi and go only as far as North St. Paul.

The weather was mild for January; the temperature had been around the freezing mark all day. I was marked up for car #1241. I had always liked that particular car -- it was smooth running, had good brakes and above all, it was warm.

I pulled out, headed for the loop. As I was going down the hill on E. 7th street, it started to mist - a light, fine rain. By the time I reached the Main Ave. Loop, it had turned freezing. The regular Mahtomedi car was due at 7 Corners at 9:12 p.m. I waited a few extra minutes, but the Mahtomedi never showed, so I pulled down to 7th & Wabasha and loaded up. By the time we left the loop, the car was loaded to the vestibules! As we ascended the E. 7th Street Hill, the ice began forming on the trolley wire. By the time we reached Duluth Ave. station, the trolley wheel was really flashing - they could see us coming ten blocks away. We stopped briefly to pick up the red kerosene lantern which was required for anyone operating out on the single track. The yard man thought I should convert to an ice cutter for the trolley wheel. (An ice cutter is a brass half hoop resembling a horse shoe - except it had several sharp teeth for scraping ice off the wire.)

Car #1241 cont.

Ice cutter installed, we started off. Crossing the railroad bridge in Hazel Park, it broke loose and was lost. About that time, I was beginning to get worried, because we still had quite a few passengers. Henry Street in North St. Paul was our destination (so I thought) but it was getting worse the further we went. We reached Ivy Avenue - the end of the double track operation. At this point, it was required to call the dispatcher and ask for clearance to go out on the single track. It was a formal thing, went something like this - "Johnson Car #1241 - east bound at Ivy to Henry Street". The dispatcher would reply back "Proceed to Henry Street and report." I told the dispatcher it was bad out here and getting worse by the minute. He replied that the Mahtomedi had not come thru the loop yet, so I'd have to go and just do the best I could. We hadn't gone very far, when I lost power -- too much ice on the wire. I got out, went to the back of the car, pulled the trolley pole down, and using the rope - I'd bang the pole against the wire. This caused the wire to sway and the ice would break loose for five or six blocks. We went through this procedure eight or ten times. Finally arriving at Henry Street with about 10 passengers aboard, I again called the dispatcher. His orders were - proceed to Mahtomedi and report. There was no turning back. There was a duty to perform - get those 10 passengers to their destination.

The weather worsened. I could now only break the ice loose for a few hundred feet at a time. I'm really worried now; I had put in a nine hour day, I was tired and now this. And, my wife didn't know where I was. At times when we lost power, I didn't quite know where we were -- out in the middle of a farmer's field, perhaps. I had to do some planning! If we could crest the Long Lake Hill, we could coast down the other side and possibly even roll all the way to Wildwood siding. Of course, by now we were going to need help to get back. The Long Lake Hill is quite steep and a half mile long. By now the ice had built up on the rails and I was lucky to get 20 MPH speed out of #1241. We had no power, and had to be careful we didn't lose all of our air. The car finally stopped at the bottom of the hill with the back portion blocking a lane of traffic on the county road crossing the track. Wouldn't you know, here comes an auto down the road! The streetcar is dark - I knew he'd hit us broadside, if not stopped. I grabbed the red lantern, dashed out onto the road, and started waving it furiously. He finally saw the light, applied his brakes, and swerved into the ditch. The support wire on the wooden trolley poles actually kept him from going completely to the bottom of the ditch. I went over to see if he was hurt, and apologized to him. Using some sand from the sandbox, and with the help from several passengers, we were able to put him back on the road, again. He also took several passengers to their destinations in Mahtomedi.

We're only about 200 yards short of the Wildwood Siding. The next half hour is spent banging ice off the wire - to cover these 200 yards. Reaching the siding, the rest of the passengers left, figuring it was better to walk.

I went to the phone booth - called the dispatcher and told him I was completely iced in -- and needed help. He said he would send the Wire Car. Now, the wire car was one of those famous TCRT red work cars with a platform on the back which is high enough to work on the wire.

It was almost midnight and the only sign of life around was a lighted cafe sign just a few blocks up the road at Wilernie. I needed a cup of coffee! Returning to #1241, I noticed the car was beginning to cool off, so I went out and stoked the stove with coal. (We carried our own coal on board.)

Back in the car, I fell asleep on the long, front seat. Awaking about 2 a.m. I went to the phone booth and called the dispatcher. He reports that the overhead wire is down, the line is tied-up. I asked him to please call my wife to let her know where I am.

Car #1241 cont.

Our phone lines were direct to the dispatcher and could not be used to make outside calls. Back to sleep again! Waking again at 4 a.m., I called the dispatcher again. The wire was still down. Soon, it began to get light. There is a rumbling coming from behind. Here comes the wire car with a man sitting on the top platform breaking the ice with a club. The wire car pushed #1241 into the wye at Wildwood and then continued to Mahtomedi. New orders to wait for the wire car to return and then follow him to Henry Street came.

Reaching Henry Street - there was mass confusion! Six cars were sitting on the siding. The day dispatcher was on duty now and he is irate because #1241 is out of place. I quickly explained what had happened. Calming down, he gave me new orders - "set signs to 7th St. to Duluth Ave. but report at Ivy Ave." Finally --- I was going home!

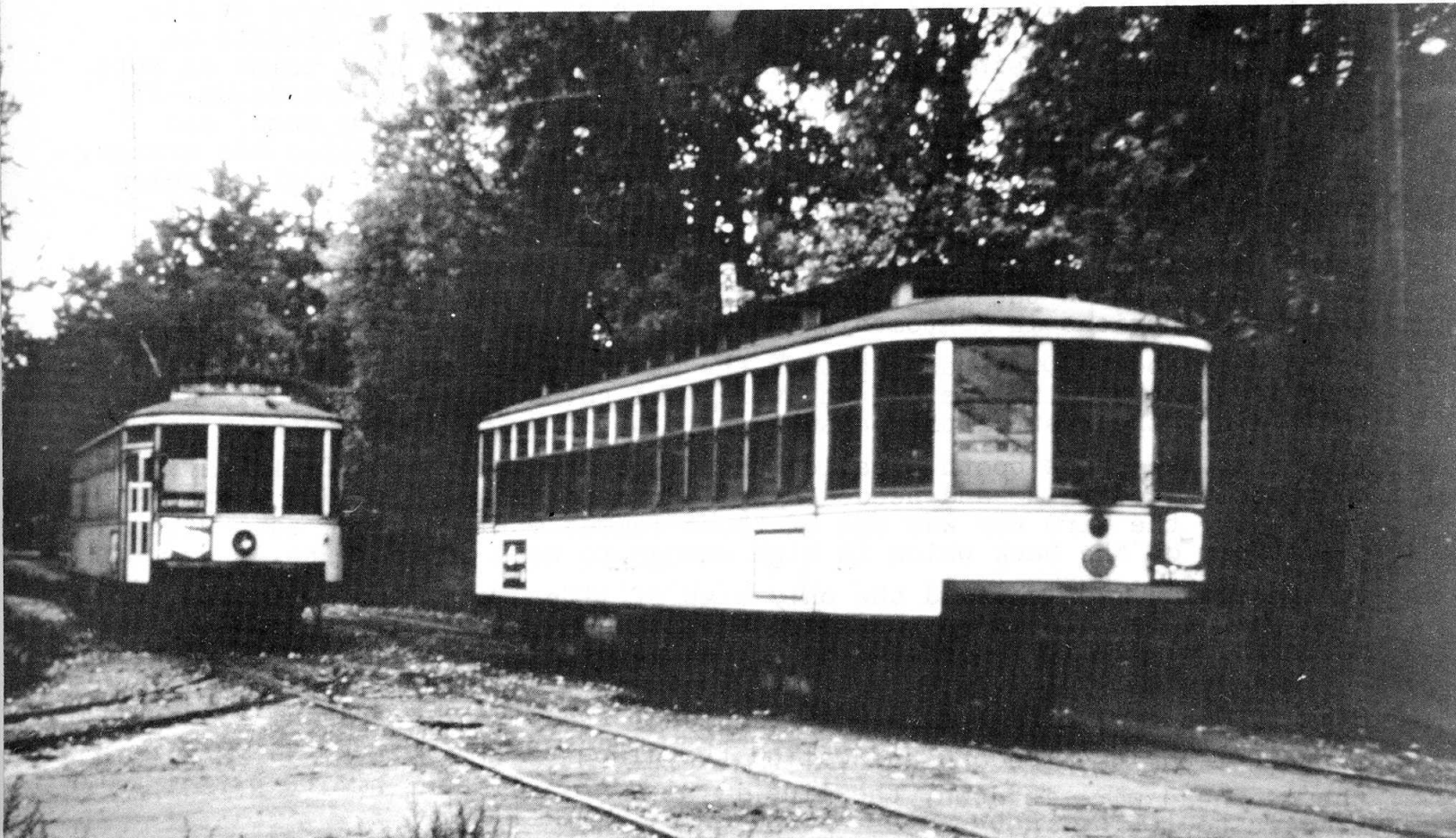
When old #1241 pulled into the Duluth Avenue yard, it was one solid mass of ice -- as though it had been pulled out of a lake!

In 1952, Duluth Avenue was closed and all operations were moved to Snelling Ave. - including #1241. I lost track of her; streetcar operations were slowly winding down and the storage tracks were full of idle cars. In the southeast corner of the yard the scrapperstorch was taking its toll.

I don't know what eventually happened to #1241 -- if it became a pile of ashes under the Midway Shopping Center or if it found a 'retirement home' at some lakeshore. But, I do remember an icy January nite on a siding at Wildwood beside a long abandoned amusement park!

This is a real Minnesota Memory!

Below: #1241 Passes sister car at Henry Street in 1956



"Electric Railways of Minnesota" ---Special Order Form

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SPRING ON THE COMO-HARRIET

Below: initial 'bobcat' grading and survey work on the North end.

Bottom: present day view of the original R-O-W open and waiting near
the future 36th St. station terminus of the C-H restoration project.

Right: profile of the "great engineer" at his transit --- Ken Snyder
helping to run survey at the North End.





MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

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